

ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE HEALTH OF THE

CRANBROOK RURAL SANITARY DISTRICT

In 1896.

CENSUS 1881.		CENSUS 1891.	
No. of Acres	41,436	No. of Acres	41,436
Inhabited Houses	2,754	Inhabited Houses	2,787
Population.....	13,773	Population.....	13,730

The Population of the Cranbrook Rural District was estimated by the method adopted by the Registrar-General to be 13,713 at the middle of 1896, showing a slight increase (4) since the middle of 1895.

The Vital Statistics for the past year are extremely satisfactory.

The registered births amounted to 300, consisting of 178 of males and 122 of females, and giving a Birth-rate of 21·8 as against 25·0 in the previous year.

One hundred and forty-eight deaths were returned, which included 68 of males and 80 of females. The Death-rate was 10·7 per 1000 as against 13·7 in 1895.

The Infant Mortality, *i.e.*, the number of deaths of infants under one year of age per 1000 births registered showed a very low number, being 90, as against 99 in the previous year.

The total deaths included 5 from one or other of the seven principal zymotic diseases, viz: 1 from Scarlet Fever, 3 from Measles and 1 from Whooping-cough. The Zymotic Death-rate was exceedingly low, being only 0·3 per 1000, as against 0·6 in 1895.

It is most satisfactory to note that no deaths occurred in the District during the year from Small-pox, Diphtheria, Enteric (Typhoid) Fever, Erysipelas or Diarrhœa.

During the year 1896 the birth-rate throughout England and Wales was 29·7, the general death-rate 17·1, and the zymotic death-rate 2·18 per 1000 of the population. The rate of mortality among infants under one year of age to each 1000 births registered was 148.

Notifiable Diseases.—Under the provisions of the Infectious Disease (Notification) Act, 102 cases were reported. These included 72 cases of Scarlet Fever, 14 of Diphtheria, 5 of Enteric Fever, 1 of Puerperal Fever and 10 of Erysipelas.

Scarlet Fever.—Of the total 72 cases reported, 20 occurred in the Parish of Benenden, 10 in Cranbrook, 15 in Goudhurst, 1 in Hawkhurst, and 26 in Sandhurst, which shows that the disease was widely distributed throughout the district. Only one case, however, proved fatal, that of a child aged 11 years in September, at Sandhurst.

Although the disease has been on the whole of a very mild character, it has considerably interfered with elementary school-work, both by the necessity for the exclusion of children from infected families and by necessity for actual school closure.

The excess of children of school age affected is shown below :—

0—1 year.	1—5 years.	5—15 years.	15—25 years.	25—65 years.
1	14	48	5	4=72 cases.

The Goudhurst National School was closed for four weeks—from June 18th to July 17th, and the Cranbrook National School from October 5th to October 17th.

I have had occasion to investigate the circumstances of several cases of Scarlet Fever which have been communicated by previous unnotified mild cases not attended by a medical man, and said to be unrecognised by the parents as Scarlet Fever until actual peeling of the skin had been pointed out. It should be clearly understood that the fact of neglecting to call in a medical man does *not* exonerate those having charge of a patient from their responsibility in the matter of notification ; and it is to be hoped that ignorance of the nature of the disease will not continue to be recognised as a reasonable excuse for non-compliance with the Act and for the infliction of a mere nominal fine, when prosecutions are instituted. It is only reasonable in this as in other cases of culpable negligence to consider that, if none were amenable to the laws but those who could be proved to be acquainted with them, not only would ignorance be continually pleaded, but persons would naturally avoid acquiring information which carried troublesome consequences with it.

The actual wording of the Act with regard to this is as follows :—

(a) “ The head of the family to which such inmate (in this Act referred to as the patient) belongs, and in his default the nearest relatives of the patient present in the building or being in attendance on the patient, and in default of such relatives every person in charge of or in attendance on the patient, and in default of any such person the occupier of the building shall, as soon as he becomes aware that the patient is suffering from an infectious disease to which this Act, applies, send notice thereof to the medical officer of health of the district.”

One child coming to school too soon after an attack may become a focus of infection, and cause derangement of school work for months, and unfortunately the effects of such carelessness does not fall on those negligent parents alone but on others who take every precaution and care of their children.

Diphtheria.—This disease, so prevalent in several neighbouring districts and throughout the country generally, produced 14 cases during the year, 9 of which occurred among young persons under 15 years of age. No deaths followed. Seven were in Cranbrook, 2 in Goudhurst, 1 in Frittenden, 3 in Hawkhurst, and 1 in Sandhurst.

Enteric (Typhoid) Fever.—Five non-fatal cases were reported, 2 in Cranbrook, 2 in Goudhurst, and 1 in Frittenden. Two of these cases were among hop-pickers and one was undoubtedly imported into the district. The remaining two were living under conditions favourable for the development of the disease and alterations were carried out in the drainage of the houses.

Puerperal Fever.—One case of this disease was notified on November 3rd at Goudhurst ; the disease took a rapidly fatal course, and the patient succumbed to it on November 9th.

Erysipelas.—All the 10 notified cases were non-fatal, and occurred 2 in Benenden, 6 in Cranbrook, and 2 in Frittenden.

NON-NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

Measles was prevalent during the spring and it became necessary to close the National School, and also the Highgate Infants' School, Hawkhurst, for a period of 6 weeks from March 4th to April 10th.

During closure I took the opportunity of inspecting the sanitary arrangements of the schools, and the Managers at once gave instructions for the recommendations made to be carried out, which included a thorough disinfection and cleansing of the schools.

Whooping-cough caused only 1 death, that of a baby at Flimwell, Goudhurst, on July 21st.

Influenza.—Five deaths were attributed to this disease—4 at Hawkhurst and 1 at Benenden during the months of February, May and September.

Isolation.—Three cases of fever occurring among hop-pickers were isolated, 2 of Scarlet Fever and 1 Typhoid Fever. The former, a young woman and her little boy, were accommodated for several weeks in some small isolated rooms at the Workhouse.

The Typhoid Fever case was a very troublesome and disagreeable one, and occurred among hop-pickers near Blue Barn Farm, Goudhurst. The woman was really a chronic invalid and should not have left home. A nurse was found and she was isolated in a hopper house, and when sufficiently recovered to move returned to her home near Hastings.

Make-shift isolation of this kind is very unsatisfactory, and some permanent building is required for the treatment of such infectious cases, a certain number of which will arise every year, to be dealt with among hop-pickers and persons with large families living in small cottages, where anything approaching adequate separation is impossible.

On the whole this District was very free from infectious disease among hop-pickers, especially considering the unfavourable season and the number, who were wandering about seeking employment.

Mr. Collins' Report of work done during the year, the customary tables of vital statistics and the returns required by the Local Government Board are appended.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

February 15th, 1897.

JAMES SCOTT TEW, M.D., B.S., D.P.H.

Cranbrook Rural District Council.

WORK CARRIED OUT BY MR. COLLINS DURING THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1896.

Main and branch drains laid and repaired	..	..	..	107
Cesspool nuisances abated	..	..	..	75
Slaughter-houses inspected	..	..	..	14
Lodging Houses inspected	..	..	..	3
Pig pound nuisances abated	..	..	..	22
Manure, rubbish and open ditch nuisances abated	..	..	..	44
Privies repaired	..	..	..	29
Infected houses fumigated and whitewashed	..	..	..	57
New privies and water closets built	..	..	..	38
Overcrowded houses	..	..	..	2
Houses unfit for habitation	..	..	..	5
Cowsheds and premises inspected	..	..	..	24
Farmers' hop-pickers accommodation inspected	..	..	..	36
Wells attended to	..	..	..	32
Notices served	..	..	..	40

TABLE A.

The number of Deaths from all causes and from the seven principal Zymotic Diseases with their Death-Rates; the principal causes of Death and the Infant Mortality in each quarter of 1896 in the Cranbrook Rural District.

QUARTERS.	Total Deaths.	Death-Rate per 1000	Deaths from Seven principal Zymotic Diseases.	Zymotic Death-Rate.	Small-pox.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Enteric Fever.	Measles.	Whooping-cough.	Diarrhoea.	Erysipelas.	Puerperal Fever.	Rheumatic Fever.	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, Pleurisy, Pneumonia.	Heart Disease.	Influenza.	Injuries.	All Other Diseases.	Deaths of Infants under one year per 1,000 Births.
1st ..	45	13.1	2	0.5	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	2	7	3	2	..	29	121
2nd ..	31	9.0	1	0.2	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	3	4	4	1	..	18	67
3rd ..	40	11.3	2	0.5	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	5	3	3	2	..	25	133
4th ..	32	9.3	0	0.0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	6	2	..	..	23	40
TOTALS	148	10.7	5	0.3	..	1	..	..	3	1	..	..	1	..	10	20	12	5	..	95	90

TABLE B.

Deaths from Zymotic Diseases during the past ten years and in 1896.

Zymotic Diseases.	1886	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	Average of ten years.	1896
Small-pox .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.0	0
Scarlet Fever ....	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	2	..	..	0.4	1
Diphtheria	1	6	1	1	..	..	1	10	1	2	2.3	0
Measles	2	1	..	..	3	..	1	7	..	..	1.4	3
Whooping-cough ..	2	5	1	2	9	1	..	4	1	6	3.1	1
Fevers.	4	..	1	2	..	1	..	3	1	..	1.2	0
Diarrhoea	2	..	1	4	2	1	1	5	1	1	1.8	0
Total Zymotics....	11	12	4	9	14	4	4	31	4	9	10.2	5
Other Zymotics....	4	..	1	1	6	4	12	12	12	5	5.7	6
Totals	15	12	5	10	20	8	16	43	16	14	15.9	11

TABLE C.

The number of deaths from all causes and from the seven principal Zymotic Diseases with their Death Rates in each Parish of the Cranbrook Rural Sanitary District in the year 1896.

Parishes.	Census Population 1891.	Total Deaths.	Death-Rate.	Deaths from 7 Zymotic Diseases.	Zymotic Death-Rate.
Sandhurst	1106	4	3·6	1	0·9
Goudhurst	2734	24	8·8	1	0·3
Frittenden	974	9	9·0	0	0·0
Benenden	1596	17	10·7	1	0·6
Hawkhurst	3274	37	11·0	2	0·5
Cranbrook	4046	57	14·3	0	0·0

TABLE OF POPULATION, BIRTHS, and of New Cases of INFECTIOUS SICKNESS, *coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the year 1896, in the CRANBROOK Rural Sanitary District; classified according to Diseases, Ages and Localities.*

NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; public institutions being shown as separate localities.	POPULATION AT ALL AGES.		Registered Births.	Aged under 5 or over 5.	New cases of Sickness in each locality coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health.				
	Census 1891.	Estima- ted to middle of 1896.			Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Enteric or Typhoid Fever.	Puerperal Fever.	Erysipelas.
Benenden.....	1596	1594	..	Under 5. 5 upwds.	2 19	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. 2
Cranbrook	4046	3974	..	Under 5. 5 upwds.	4 5	.. 7	.. 2	.. ..	1 5
Goudhurst	2734	2710	..	Under 5. 5 upwds.	2 13	1 1	.. 2	.. 1	....
Frittenden	974	994	..	Under 5. 5 upwds.	.. ..	.. 1	.. 1	.. ..	.. 2
Hawkhurst	3274	3358	..	Under 5. 5 upwds.	.. 1	1 2	.. 2	....	....
Sandhurst	1106	1083	..	Under 5. 5 upwds.	7 19	.. 1	....	....	....
Total.....	13730	13713	300	Under 5. 5 upwds.	15 57	2 12	.. 5	.. 1	1 9

Report

ON THE

HEALTH

OF THE

Dymbrook Rural District

in 1896,

BY

JAMES SCOTT TEW,

M.D., D.P.H.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

W. T. SIMMONS, PRINTER, CRANBROOK.